

OVERLAND
and
UNDERGROUND

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**OVERLAND
AND
UNDERGROUND**



THE AUTHOR

**OVERLAND
AND
UNDERGROUND**



**POEMS OF THE WEST
AND ITS MINES**



**By
D. G. THOMAS**

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by
D. G. THOMAS
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TO
MY WIFE AND DAUGHTER
I DEDICATE
THIS BOOK

These poems, the children of my brain, were born, as you know, between shifts. I am aware that they lack in many of the essentials which go or ought to go into a work of this character; but I have done my best to make them acceptable to you and to those of my friends who will read them on that account.

THE AUTHOR

FOREWORD

THE Coleridge definition of poetry, "The best words in the best order," may be adequately judged by a literary standard, but the "Song of the Soul" would much more regard the substance than the form.

"Overland and Underground" is the epitome of a life begun in poverty at nine years of age as a trap-door boy in a coal mine, and after a thorough course in the school of Hardknocks with Perserverance as monitor and Experience as the teacher, completed as Superintendent of great mines of the mighty West.

Despite the hardships suffered, the cares of life have never been able to interrupt the harmony that has always existed between the great Celtic heart of the author and Nature in all her moods and forms. His human-nature poems show that in his rise from bottom to top, he has not forgotten those who have not climbed so fast, nor lost sympathy for them and their hard cheerless lot.

Mr. Thomas has spent most of his life in the coal mines, and his poems relating thereto are reflections of his own experiences. His work in the West took him to the mountains of Wyoming where he learned to love Nature in a new form, and his poems of the hills express this affection.

These poems are written by a miner to the miners and for those familiar with the dark, black holes, their people, their surroundings and their tragedies, they have the same message of human sympathy and brotherhood found in the songs of Robert Burns. To have seen this collection grow from one to many, to have enjoyed the personal friendship of the author and his faithful loving wife and daughter, to have seen him overcome tremendous odds and win in the fierce conflict with natural inclination and vicious environment, has been a great privilege and my extreme pleasure.

JOSEPH HENRY SAYER.

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OVERLAND
AND
UNDERGROUND

THE SUNBEAM AND THE DEW

NIIGHT shook her garments, and a shower
 Of dewy gems fell on each flower,
Sparkling beneath the moon-lit skies
As love does in a maiden's eyes.

She said on leaving the pearly dew:
“In the morning I shall call for you,
If you a faithful vigil keep
Nor for a moment go to sleep.”

They play and in a chorus sing
Love to the flowers to which they cling,
And now and then they slyly peep
To see if any have gone to sleep.

A Breeze came from his home somewhere
And sees the dew-drops glist'ning there,
So he among them gently creeps
And rocks, and rocks till each one sleeps.

THE SUNBEAM AND THE DEW

They smile as children do in dreams
Lulled by the Breeze and rippling streams—
Blowing and flowing in accents deep—
Soothing the dew drops in their sleep.

At last the dawn with noiseless tread
Comes creeping from his eastern bed,
Descending from the mountain's steep
And finds the dew-drops fast asleep.

The song birds make the woodlands ring
With welcome to the new born king
Who grandly o'er the mountain creeps,
But the dew unmindful, ever sleeps.

The grand old monarch of the day
Fills the earth with his glad array,
While night with many a hurried leap
Runs off and leaves the dew asleep.

THE SUNBEAM AND THE DEW

He sees the flowers bedecked with gems
From tinted leaves to slender stems,
And hears Night in the distance weep,
Her jewels lost, because asleep.

Over the flowers a moment he stops
To gather the shining pearly drops
Lying there in the blossom's keep
Peacefully dreaming, fast asleep.

And one by one each precious gem
He places on his diadem,
Where they on waking from their dreams
Were changed from dew to bright sunbeams.

REAGAN'S CABIN

THE Thunder mountains proudly tower
High above the tallest pines,
Frowning at the men that scar them,
Boring in their sides deep mines;
And the icy blast of winter
Fill their crevasses with snow,
Which the summer sun releases
To the streams of Idaho.

There the lordly Salmon river
Rushes madly to the main,
Adding streamlet after streamlet
To its ever swirling train;
And a trail leads on from Warren
By Sim Willie's fruitful ranch,
Till it comes to Reagan's cabin
Nestling close beside a branch.

Who was Reagan? None will answer,
Save he was of Celtic race,
Loving freedom as a lover
Loves his sweetheart's form and face,
Fought for it in many battles,
In the trenches wet and red,
Till the flag above him triumphed
And his foemen's cause was dead.

REAGAN'S CABIN

Then he sought that quiet shelter
Far away from scenes of strife,
Building there his lonely cabin,
Living there his lonely life;
Freedom's breeze around him playing,
Freedom's waters by him flow,
That for which his great heart panted
He had found in Idaho.

Delving deep into the gravel
While the water ceaseless rolled
Through the rude, rough patterned sluices
Formed to catch the grains of gold;
Season after season found him
Bravely fronting Fate's array,
Left him wearier and nearer
To that bourne of endless day.

Once his feathered friends departed
In the autumn's russet storm.
Leaving him alone and lonely
With bowed head and feeble form;
Came a trapper down the river
To the cabin's open door,
Where he found grim death had entered
And that Reagan was no more.

REAGAN'S CABIN

Folding o'er the silent bosom
Those thin hands so hard and worn,
Then the wasted, lifeless body
To its resting place was borne.

* * * *

There within a woodland shelter
Where the mountain daisies grow,
Reagan sleeps away the seasons
In the wilds of Idaho.

ROBERT BURNS

Recited on Burns' Anniversary at Evanston, Wyo.

WE meet tonight to honor him,
Old Scotia's fav'rite son,
Whose name and fame will never dim
As long as waters run;
As long as sun and moon look down
Upon this world so fair
Each year we'll proudly gather round
To praise the bard of Ayr.

In fancy we can see the cot
Wherein his life began,
The misery of his hard lot
From childhood unto man,
And wonder how a soul so great
With gifts beyond compare
Could rise from such a lowly state
Upon the banks of Ayr.

ROBERT BURNS

Misfortune waited at his birth
 His future to control,
But though his frame she held to earth
 She could not hold his soul;
And soaring upward like the lark
 Unfettered by despair,
His songs sent sunshine through the dark
 Upon the banks of Ayr.

We see him mingle with the poor
 Down-trodden of his race,
Who, like himself, are held secure
 In poverty's embrace;
With cheerful song he strives to free
 Them from all pressing care
By singing man's equality
 Upon the banks of Ayr.

He taught his fellowmen to feel
 Like brothers of the soil,
To hate the man whose iron heel
 Pressed on the brow of toil;
The man who labored long and hard
 With forehead hot and bare,
Was more to him than king's regard,
 Upon the banks of Ayr.

ROBERT BURNS

The maiden crowned with beauty's charm,
And filled with strange unrest,
Finds solace walking arm in arm
With him who loves her best;
She feels his heart in rapture beat,
Its passion to declare,
And over her an incense sweet
Comes from the banks of Ayr.

We see these trusting lovers stand
Each side a purling stream,
Fast holding to each others hand
Secure in love's young dream;
His heart, his life he fondly gives
That she might with him share
The love that in his bosom lives
Upon the banks of Ayr.

He weeps as if his tender heart
Would break with pain and woe,
When he and Highland Mary part
To meet no more below;
Fell death has closed her gentle eyes
And left him to despair,
And we can hear his groans and sighs
Upon the banks of Ayr.

ROBERT BURNS

How wonderful was his brief span,
So full of fire divine!
While poverty clung to the man
Fame made his home her shrine;
His songs found lodgment in the heart
Of sorrow and of care,
And raised it to a nobler part
Upon the banks of Ayr.

Then let us all with fond acclaim
Become a merry throng
By honoring our poet's name
With dancing and with song;
While sadness from our presence turns
To hide itself elsewhere,
We'll have a jolly night with Burns
Upon the banks of Ayr.

WE'LL GO TO LANCASHEER

COOM wife an' sit ye doun a bit,
Ye must be worn I know,
Wi' trudging like a patient slave
To keep the house just so,
An' let the childer do the work
That ye are wont to do,
Ye've labored long enough for them,
Let them now work for you;
Coom draw yer chair close up to mine
An' be content a while,
That I may see once more your face
Beam wi' the oud sweet smile,
For I've been thinkin' lately
How nice 'twould be, my dear,
For both on us to take a trip
Back to oud Lancasheer.

Now stop a bit afore ye speak,
An' hear my story through:
I got a letter yesterday
From one that's dear to you;
It said as how yer mother
Wor so lonely, old and gray,
An' how she longed to see us two
Afore she passed away;

WE'LL GO TO LANCASHEER

I did na' tell of it last night
I feared 'twould grieve ye sore,
That's why I waited till today
So I could think it o'er,
An' I've been thinkin' ever sin'
That it would give us cheer
To take a pleasant journey back
To good oud Lancasheer.

Somehow I could na' sleep last night,
My eye-lids would na' close,
I rolled an' tossed about in bed,
But could na' find repose;
My thoughts like childer out o' school
Kept flittin' to an' fro,
But always stopped among the scenes
We knew so long ago;
When night had vanished an' the dawn
Came wi' its golden light
I then wor wide awake as now,
An' had been all the night;
But happiness wor in my heart,
My mind wor bright and clear
When I resolved that coom what may
We'd go to Lancasheer.

WE'LL GO TO LANCASHEER

There's Ned an' Tom, our only sons,
They know just what to do,
An' Mary wi' the kind blue eyes,
That looks so much like you—
The three are urgin' us to go,
They've talked it o'er wi' me,
An' now are gettin' things in shape
For us to cross the sea;
So get yersel all ready, lass,
Don't tarry nor delay,
An' bid the neebors fond goodbye,
For we will start today;
An' sin' I've fully made my mind,
I have na' e'en a fear
But that we'll cross in safety
An' again see Lancasheer.

WE'LL GO TO LANCASHEER

When we arrive at Bolton,
The place where we wor wed,
I know we'll be right welcoom
By the landlord o' Nags Head,
For he was very good to us
Upon our weddin' day,
An' so I'm sure he'll be the same
When we go back that way;
We'll stop wi' him a day or two,
To meet oud friends in town,
An' then we'll go to Alchemoor
An' to the Rose an' Crown,
Where we will rest oursels a bit
An' have a sup o' beer
In memory o' days we passed
In good oud Lancasheer.

Coom now an' fix thyself a bit,
Put on thy very best,
The people over there shall know
How Yankee folk are dressed,
We'll show them we have money
Saved against a rainy day,
An' better off in worldly things
Than 'fore we went away;

WE'LL GO TO LANCASHEER

Coom, hurry now the time is short
An' let us make a start,
The sparkle in yer kind blue eye
Tells me what's in yer heart,
Thy mother will be happy
When she sees us both appear
Upon her little door-step there
In good oud Lancasheer.

O how my heart is longin'
For a sight o' that oud place
Where I was born an' where I first
Beheld yer kindly face;
The comrades that I use to have
In those good days of yore,
I wonder if they'r still alive
An' live in Alchemoor?
Of course I know we'er gettin' on,
Our hair is turnin' gray,
But what on that? Our hearts are young
An' full of joy today,
An' we will be more happy
When England's shore appear,
An' greet us in the name o' all
We love in Lancasheer.

HOME AGAIN FROM LANCASHEER

YES, lads, I'm glad we'er back again,
Yer mother here an' me
Have had a very anxious trip
Returnin' o'er the sea;
We thought on you and Mary
An' all we left at home,
That's why we could na' coom too fast
Across the ocean' foam;
We'd only been in England
Not above a day or two,
When somethin' kept a nudgin'
An' a pullin' us to you;
Yer mother could na' sleep o' nights
An' I wor feelin' queer
Because ye wor so far away
An' us in Lancasheer.

The ship as we went over in,
The biggest we had seen,
Wor loaded with nice things to eat
An' every thing was clean,
But still we could na' eat it,
Nor taste on it nor smell
Wi'out unloadin' all we had
Inside on us as well.

HOME AGAIN FROM LANCASHEER

'Twas after we'd seen England's shore
 Spread out afore our sight
That we began to feel that we
 Possessed an appetite;
Yer mother ate a little
 As the good ship ventured near,
But I decided I would wait
 An' eat in Lancasheer.

The rugged cliffs that border
 On oud England's verdant land,
Appeared to kindly welcoom all
 Returnin' to her strand;
The voices of the people
 An' the bustin' noise an' din
They made upon the monster deck
 Just as the ship sailed in,
Wor cheerful-like an' pleasant
 After days upon the foam,
But none on it could take the place
 Of what we left at home,
No, none of it was home-like,
 'Twas all so strange an' queer,
I almost wished we'd not begun
 The trip to Lancasheer.

HOME AGAIN FROM LANCASHEER

At Bolton things are not the same
As we had known afore,
The landlord of the oud Nag's Head
Is gone forever more;
Another man is in his stead,
A man we did na' know,
That's why we only tarried there
A half an hour or so;
The little town of Alchemoor
Has changed its pretty name
For one as I don't like at all,
An' this I think a shame;
The Rose an' Crown is runnin' yet
We drank some on its beer,
But somehow it did not taste right
Not like oud Lancasheer.

HOME AGAIN FROM LANCASHEER

We found yer Grandma aged much,
An' not o'er strong an' spry,
But happy at the sight on us
An' quite resigned to die;
We watched her gently fade away,
Her eyes grow strangely dim,
When God's sweet angel came an' took
Her saintly soul wi' him;
We laid her in a quite nook
Beneath a scented rose
That she had planted there hersel'
While shapin' for life's close;
An' there among her kith an' kin
She'll sleep from year to year
Until the trumpet calls the dead
To life in Lancasheer.

Some of the friends o' early days
Had wandered far away
To distant lands, as we had done,
An' there they chose to stay;
But few wor left to meet us,
An' when we saw these few,
We noticed they wor sadly changed
An' not the friends we knew;

HOME AGAIN FROM LANCASHEER

Others are in the silent graves,
Where all on us must go,
When death forbids the stream o' life
To longer ebb an' flow;
An' when I gazed upon the mounds
That held oud friends so dear,
I felt that we had seen enough
Of good oud Lancasheer.

Yes, yes, I'm feelin' better now
Than I have felt for years,
At seein' all on you so well,
Yer mother's happy tears,
An' every thing about the place
Fills me wi' such a joy
As nothing in this world could change,
Or banish or destroy;
I love this land where ye wor born,
That kindly shelters me,
An' I'll admit I also love
That oud land o'er the sea;
But it is not my home no more,
An' I am happy here,
But proud that I have seen again
Our dear oud Lancasheer.



FONTENELLE

Where can one see a grander scene
In all of Nature's vast domain?

FONTENELLE
A MOUNTAIN STREAM

THE sun has left a golden rim
 Of glory shining in his stead;
Meanwhile the ocean welcomes him
 Into her broad, green-mantled bed;
The moon, attended by her maids—
 The faithful stars that love her well—
Will soon look down into thy glades,
 Thou ever rippling Fontenelle.

Where can one see a grander scene
 In all of nature's vast domain?
No picture spread upon a screen
 Could so well please the eye and brain;
And contemplation leads the mind
 Along time's path as through a dell
Beyond the ken of human kind
 To thy beginning, Fontenelle.

The mind of man with all its lore,
 With all its depth and breadth of thought,
Becomes confused while brooding o'er
 The years you saw and counted not—
And counted not? Perhaps I'm wrong;
 The record may still with you dwell,
May yet be read by bards whose song
 Will tune with mine, sweet Fontenelle.

FONTENELLE

Since Bonneville stood upon thy shore
Thy history we plainly scan,
But what was it in years before
Thou were beheld by mortal man?
But then enough is seen and known
To charm the senses with a spell;
You gladden us with thy rich tone
Thou ever flowing Fontenelle.

Here shaggy herds were wont to graze
Upon each green, delightful bank,
And bending down to drink would gaze
And see their image while they drank;
Unconscious of the lurking foe
Until they heard his savage yell
When there was mingled with thy flow
Their warm life blood, sweet Fontenelle.

Today where once the bison tramped
Along this valley, rich and green;
Where savages and trappers camped
And clashed in warfare's frightful mien,
Are cattle browsing round at will
And homes where peaceful fam'lies dwell,
Dependent on this limpid rill—
Thy silv'ry waters, Fontenelle.

FONTENELLE

Oh! winding stream! Oh! laughing rill!
I see the willows bending low,
As if to listen to the trill
Thy waters make as on they go;
The snow-capped peaks that gave thee birth
Can ne'er a sweeter story tell,
Can ne'er bestow upon the earth
A richer gift than Fontenelle.

JAMES BRIDGER

1804—1881

Mountaineer, Trapper, Hunter, Guide

A BEDOUIN of the wild, wild West was he;
Her secrets, Nature never from him held;
His eye far-set, the eagle's could out-see;
In courage strong, in woodcraft unexcelled.

His years were spent in solitude and strife,
In wilderness, in regions new and quaint;
The busy marts, the city's bustling life,
To him were prisons barred by harsh restraint.

The first white man to gaze on Great Salt Lake,
That wonder lying in the mountain's lap;
The Yellowstone, where waters fall and break
In awful grandeur through the rock-worn gap.

The wind-carved rocks still pedestal the peaks,
Still keep their hooded summits in the sky;
The vagrant cloud in passing often seeks
To shield them from the gaze of mortal eye.

The great Tetons, the sisters of the range,
Encrowned alike in diadems of snow;
Remain the same, though they have seen a
change
Come over hill and valley far below.

JAMES BRIDGER

The shaggy herds have vanished from their
haunts,

The redman, once their owner, pines and
fades;

All must succumb unto the whiteman's wants—
The greedy hand of commerce which pervades

He lived the nomad's life, the Indian's ways,
His comradeship he loved, his manners aped;

He dwelt with him until his closing days,
Then to the noisy city he escaped.

The path he made, became in after years
The highway for an Empire westward bent;
Nor dreamed it once, amid its hopes and fears,
Of him who gave to it a continent.

DOWN IN A COAL MINE
A REMINISCENCE

COME, gentle muse, let us descend
Into the caverns, deep and wet;
Perhaps we'll find a cherished friend
At work there yet.

For mem'ry to my vision brings
A picture that will not depart;
Meanwhile she plays upon the strings
That hold my heart.

So, backward o'er life's road I go—
To other days and youthful years,
Where first I tasted of its woe
And bitter tears;
And I behold a little child
That scarce ten summers yet had seen,
By stern necessity beguiled
To labor mean.

His eye, as bright as is the dew
Upon the rose leaf in the morn,
His soul as sinless as the blue
The heaven's adorn;
His voice, like childhood's happy voice
Is pleasing in its tender tone,
And he is ready to rejoice
At kindness shown.

DOWN IN A COAL MINE

His home is dear to his young heart,
 Wherein he never felt alarm;
Embellished by a mother's art
 And matchless charm;
And here he learned to love the light
 And air God freely gives to all,
But now grim hunger, gaunt and white,
 Begins to call.

I hear the whistle's loud, hoarse blast
 Call labor ere it yet is day,
And sleep that holds its eye-lids fast
 Flies swift away;
The birds are singing in the trees;
 Are pouring out their tuneful lays,
Which mingle with the morning breeze
 Like songs of praise.

The little child is kissed and wakes;
 Two loving arms around him press,
And from his lowly cot she takes
 And helps him dress;
A scanty meal, then hand in hand
 He goes with father to the pit;
Too young to know or understand
 The cause of it.

DOWN IN A COAL MINE

He stands upon the waiting cage
Prepared to disappear from sight;
The devil noting well his age
 Laughs with delight;
Aye laughs—because 'tis here he stands
 With tools that tempt a little child,
With which when taken in his hands
 He is defiled.

Such little ones with sinless souls,
 Amid the darkness, smoke and din,
Soon learn in those black, grimy holes
 The ways of sin;
The words he hears are not all clean,
 Would not a charming presence grace;
But then, perhaps, they match the scene
 Of such a place.

He smells the smoky, fetid air,
 And breathing it his senses swim,
While something like unto despair
 Comes over him;
But he must work, though sick and sore,
 Must help to keep the wolf at bay,
The butcher and the company store
 Must have their pay.

DOWN IN A COAL MINE

O, Poverty! the grief and pain;
The misery and carking care
Attendant on thy lowly train
Are hard to bear;
And were it not for Hope's bright ray
That yet within us dimly glows,
We'd fall upon life's stormy way
O'ercome with woes.

Again the whistle's noisy blast
Is heard to echo o'er the hill;
The long, long weary day is past,
The world is still;
And homeward in the dying day
The toil-worn father and the son
Are seen to slowly wend their way,
Their labors done.

He sees his home, and as he nears,
A face his weariness beguiles;
A figure in the door appears—
An angel smiles;
For there his loving mother stands
With outstretched arms to greet her boy
Who shows his tender, blistered hands
And weeps for joy.

DOWN IN A COAL MINE

O, Mother! when I saw thy form
Laid low in icy death's embrace,
I yet could see a hallowed charm
In thy sweet face;
The memory of by-gone years
Rushed o'er me like a flood of woe,
Revealing all the joys and tears
Of long ago.

My much loved sire in manhood's prime
Succumbed to hardships underground,
And you, who loved me all the time
Likewise have found
A resting place from care and strife;
And now you both sleep in the shade
Where poverty, the ban of life
Can ne'er invade.

THE MONTH OF MAY

THE sweet-eyed May, scent-laden,
Trips gaily into view;
Her tender feet, from wading
Are moist with April's dew.

The silent hill and valley
Where sleeping verdure lies,
Behold their tenants rally
And open wide their eyes.

The trees put out their banners
On every slender stem;
From which come glad hosannas
Of birds that sing in them.

Her magic spell—unbroken
By e'en an icy chill—
Remains to safely open
The buds that frost would kill

When trees and flowers blossom
Late in her afternoon,
She'll gather them and toss them
Upon the lap of June.

THE MINE EXPLOSION

Founded on an incident of the coal mine explosion
at Hanna, Wyo., June 30, 1903.

YE lovers of the earth and sky,—
The air and warm sunshine;
Give heed while I relate a tale
About a deep coal mine;
How death upon a cloud of flame
Rode madly through the pit,
And in his ire consumed with fire
The men that toil'd in it.

Two brothers died below that day,
Two brothers fond and dear,
Who came from England's distant shores
To live and labor here;
Their wives—two handsome new made brides—
Came with them o'er the foam
To aid and bless with love's caress
The founding of a home.

THE MINE EXPLOSION

They settled in a mountain camp
Where nature long had frowned.
So desolate the hills and plains
So barren was the ground
That not a tree nor e'en a flower
Could find a place to grow;
For shifting sand rolled o'er the land
Like winter's new-born snow.

These brothers were inured to work
From childhood in a mine,
Where ever present dangers lurk
To frustrate man's design;
Where hardship left upon the brow
Its ugly mark of care,
Where all was blight and gloom and night
To those that labored there.

Their names—well never mind their names—
We called them Bob and Joe;
As such we knew them in the mine,
As such we'll ever know.
When numbers are engulfed in death
By sheets of livid flame,
We note the sum of those o'ercome
And not so much the name.

THE MINE EXPLOSION

Poor Mary from her childhood hour
Had known the keenest strife,
And happiness had only come
To her as Bob's sweet wife.

When he was close, her dark brown eyes
Beamed forth her loving pride,
But when away, the neighbors say
She feared lest woe betide.

She'd talk to them about the mine,
About the deadly damp,
That ever waits to touch the flame
On some poor collier's lamp,
Then burning madly rush along
The channels underground,
Until its breath had stilled in death
All living souls it found.

And talking thus the tears would flow
Like rain adown each cheek,
Convulsive sobs would shake her frame
Till she could scarcely speak.
The neighbors noting well her grief
Declared with tearful sigh
If death should rob her life of Bob
She, too, would surely die.

THE MINE EXPLOSION

But Joe's wife was a diff'rent lass,
Light hearted all day long;
No sadness seemed to cloud her sky
Nor mar sweet Nellie's song;
She'd laugh at Mary's gloomy moods,
Then say with playful wit:
"It's time enough to cross the bridge
When we have come to it."

Love plays queer pranks with women's hearts,
So masterful his skill,
That smiles and tears and hopes and fears
He causes at his will;
Poor Mary's tears her love bespoke,
For Bob they'd ever flow;
While Nellie's song the whole day long
Spoke equally for Joe.

The men worked on from day to day
In that dark, deep pit:
With pick and drill they toil'd until
The hour would come to quit.
There was yet a cheerfulness
To bless their lives
And set them in love's sweet way
With their wives?

THE MINE EXPLOSION

And would not Mary's eyes be wet,
Her tears of gladness flow,
And would not Nellie's joyful song
Give happiness to Joe?
A bath, and after that a meal—
The collier's main repast—
Would drive away the cares of day
Like chaff before a blast.

One morning in the month of June
The sky was bright and clear,
The whistle sent its dismal sound
To workmen far and near;
The miners heeding duty's call
Bade loved ones fond goodbye,
But not a sign came from the mine
To tell them death was nigh.

The gasmen in their morning round
Had been from place to place;
Had marked with chalk the day and date
Upon each working face;
Then out they went to meet the men
Who waited there in line
To hear them say the word, ere they
Went down into the mine.

THE MINE EXPLOSION

The colliers one by one approached,
Approached, but dared not pass
The spot where stood those cautious men
Who watched the deadly gas,
And asked: "How is my place today?"
A watchman then replied,
"Tis safe and sound, no gas was found,
All, all is safe inside."

And thus assured that all was well,
They entered that black hole,
And every man at once began
To blast and load his coal.
The engines groaned and shrieked and hissed,
The trips arose and fell,
The busy hum of rope and drum
Said all was safe and well.

The wives, engaged in wonted tasks,
Pursued them with a will;
The little children laughed and played
Most happily, until—
A shock as of an earthquake came
With fearful, loud portent;
Then from the mine came forth a sign
Which told them what it meant.

THE MINE EXPLOSION

A terror such as fear provokes
Held them in its embrace;
A ghastly pallor spread its tinge
On every person's face.

They saw the angry smoke and flame
Leap upward from the slope,
And in its glare they felt despair
Rush in, and kill their hope.

Oh! God! it is an awful sight;
Grim ruin everywhere!
Since this much we can plainly see,
What must it be down there?
What has become of those brave men
At work deep underground,
Who stood in line here at the mine,
When all was safe and sound.

At last the spell that held them all
Relaxed its fearful hold,
The frenzied women madly rushed
To where the red flames rolled,
And peering in that dark abyss
They yet could see it flare,
As though it sought each open spot
To see if life were there.

THE MINE EXPLOSION

In horror and in wild dismay
They gathered round that hole,
Imploring God to spare his rod
And save the colliers' soul
Poor Mary, foremost at the scene
Weeped bitterly and long;
But Nellie's face we could not trace
Among the widowed throng.

While Mary lingered near the mine,
The picture of despair,
Sweet Nellie, broken-hearted, stayed
At home, quite helpless there;
She knew no face, she heard no voice;
But plaintively and low
She tried to coo a love song to
Bring back her dear, dead Joe.

Week after week brave volunteers
Undaunted by dismay,
Toil'd ceaselessly to find the men
Who died below that day,
But wreck and ruin filled the mine;
Obstructions high and wide
Like demons lay to bar the way
And keep the dead inside.

THE MINE EXPLOSION

The evening Bob and Joe were found
A figure strangely white,
Like lily fair was lying there
On her lowly cot that night.
The stars were vying with the moon
In lighting heaven's dome,
When through the door an angel bore
Her gentle spirit home.

The new made graves are filled at last
Bob sleeps in one alone,
The wild winds sigh as they pass by
With many a low sad moan;
And Mary wandered far away,
Just where I do not know;
But neighbors tell how poor sweet Nell
Sleeps in the grave with Joe.

NIGHT

THE mountain's shadow goes to greet
The calm, approaching night;
And in the valley where they meet
They lovingly unite.

Her silent footsteps softly creep
Along the path of Day;
And if the road be rough and steep
The stars light up the way.

The fretful child, worn with his play
Is kissed, and lo! he dreams
All weariness and pain away
Among the starry beams.

And he, the toiler for the home,
On whom so much depends
Knows, when he sees her gently come,
'Tis as one of his friends.

O Night! the friend of weariness
Giver of rest and joy!
The cares of day that on us press,
You, while you reign, destroy.

IT'S FISHING TIME

IT'S fishing time, the mountain stream
Is calling loud;
The pebbles in the ripples gleam
In misty shroud;
Do you not hear the water hum?
Its merry chime
Tells us to hurry up and come—
Its fishing time.

It's fishing time; go for your rod
Your line and reel,
By simply turning o'er the sod
You'll catch and feel
The juicy worms—the best of bait—
That twist and climb
As if they'd like to shun their fate—
It's fishing time.

It's fishing time; away with care,
Let it remain
To nurse the semblance of despair
And fancied pain;
The mountains have no naughty germs
Committing crime,
So hurry up and dig the worms,
It's fishing time.



IT'S FISHING TIME

SONG OF THE AIR IN THE MINE

I WAS sitting in the entry,
 Humming low a fancied song,
While my fevered brow was cooling,
 In the air that rushed along,
Through the dreary, darkened chambers
 Where the deadly lurking damp
Lingers harmlessly till started
 By the flame on someone's lamp.

The pick, pick, pick of the miners
 I heard in the chambers afar,
Like the noise of cracking muskets
 When soldiers are at war;
Now and then a sound like cannon
 Roared out with a lurid glare,
When a blast, red-tongued, exploded
 And rolled on the vibrant air.

Onward—the current moved onward,
 Swiftly and coldly it flew
Into the farthest recesses
 Still keeping constant and true;
Hurrying past me it murmured
 In language quite careless and free:
“O, man, thy life shall be forfeit
 If thou for a moment stop me.

SONG OF THE AIR IN THE MINE

“Make room for my wings, O mortal,
 Make room for my wings to fly
With breath for the panting toilers
 Or they will perish and die;
Stand not in my way for an instant
 Obstruct not my hard-worn path,
Or the gas that I should make harmless
 Will flame in its awful wrath.

“When the world was in disorder,
 Ere the days and nights began
Changing cycles with each other,
 Long before the birth of man,
I was constantly in motion
 Making ready all the earth
For the coming and the welcome
 Of humanity’s proud birth.

“Then I lived to be man’s servant
 On the land and on the wave,
Doing wonders at his bidding,
 Working like a faithful slave;
Driving clouds across the heavens
 When he needed cooling rain;
When dispelling them that sunshine
 Might smile on the earth again.

SONG OF THE AIR IN THE MINE

“Now they take me in the darkness
Where the Devil’s imps abound;
There to kill the gas that gathers
Like a stealthy foe around,
Waiting to disclose its presence
When a flaming lamp is near
To ignite it, then to hasten
On its wild and mad career.

“Keep my passageway wide open,
Make me sing as on I go,
Then the gas that I encounter
Meets an unrelenting foe;
I alone can make it harmless,
Make it shudder, break and flee,
And in safety keep the miners,
That depend for life on me.”

JOE BLACK'S TRIP

OUR first stop was at Portland,
Where the everlasting rain
Rolls from the clouds like torrents
Rushing headlong down a plain,
An' when the clouds was empty
They'd go sailing out once more
To fill up with the ocean
Then return again an' pour;
I thought of my own mountains
These dry an' rollin' plains
An' wondered what they'd look like
Soaked up in them there rains,
An' I said give me Wyomin'
With its icy air and snow
An' the jingle of the sleigh-bells
Which these people do not know.

JOE BLACK'S TRIP

Then we went to California
To try and shed the rain
But all the time them pesky clouds
Kept follerin' the train,
And poured on us their contents
Whene'er they got a show,
And soaked us soul an' body,
Which was durn sight wus nor snow.
The city of the Angels
That we'd read so much about,
Has lots of pretty flowers
Inside the fence and out;
But I wouldn't give a petal
From our native, old wild rose
For all the fancy botany
That in that country grows.

Where'er we went we had to go
Beneath a umber-rel,
'Cause when it wasn't rainin'
It was simply hot as—well,
I can't find words to say it—
But while we sojourned there
My mountain home kept callin' us
To come and breathe its air,

JOE BLACK'S TRIP

To come an' see the cattle
An' the fodder green an' rich,
An' drink the icy water
That was runnin' in the ditch;
An' I tell ye, boys, a longin'
Filled my old eyes with a mist,
An' something kept a pullin'
That we couldn't well resist.

Of course I seen the oranges
An' lemons on the trees,
But how in all tarnation
Can a fellow live on these?
A little fruit in season
Is well enough, no doubt
But there's nothin' like good beef-steak
To make a man pan out;
An' here upon the home ranch
Are the things that fairly suit
To make a man contented
An' a great deal more to boot;
Its not too hot in summer,
In winter not too cold,
An' grub that keeps us healthy
As we lovin'ly grow old.

JOE BLACK'S TRIP

No, I wouldn't give Wyomin'
Nur a mountain nur a plain,
Fur all of Californy,
Her sunshine an' her rain;
Her banks of pretty flowers,
Nur them whoppin' big grape vines,
'Cause ye can't work when its rainin'
An' its too hot when it shines;
I'd rather be on Piney
Where the cattle grow an' thrive,
Where we can sleigh in winter
An' in the summer drive,
An' visit with the neighbors
In a manner free from strife,
Than to live in any other place
An' worry out my life.

ON WOMAN'S RIGHTS

An answer to an attack on woman's
suffrage, made by D. B. R.

AH! Laddie, I have read your chatter,
Wherein you rant and rave and clatter
'Gainst Women's Rights, which does not scatter
Nor hide in fear.

I deem your screed less mind than matter
And not sincere.

I've seen the women of my state
Go to the polls, calm and sedate,
And cast a vote to elevate
The human race,
Without the slightest fear or hate
And with good grace.

Glance backward on life's stormy page,
And note the change from age to age
Wherein each period does assuage
The poor man's lot;
See if it justifies your rage,
Your unkind thought.

ON WOMAN'S RIGHTS

Progression in the human race
Goes forward with a steady pace;
The new ideals the old displace
 And help us on;
So we should meet them face to face
 While yet 'tis dawn.

Man's freedom came, I'd have you note,
When he began to think and vote,
In times not very far remote
 From this our age;
Ere then he floundered like a boat
 In ocean's rage.

Since we have seen ourselves advance,
And suffrage does our toil enhance,
Why do you hurl your shining lance
 At targets human;
Why not allow a fighting chance
 To our fair women?

The Movement which you vainly scorn,
Has oft the brunt of battle borne,
And though its flag is badly torn
 It's there to stay
Till Gabriel blows his golden horn
 On Judgment day.

ON WOMAN'S RIGHTS

And why should women be denied
The Rights with which you are supplied?
Are you so lordly in your pride
 As not to share
With her who suffers at your side
 Your sumptuous fare?

Let her, my lad, have every right
Which man does for himself invite;
Be freed from pettiness and spite
 And sad dejection;
And in addition, man, go fight
 For her protection.



WASHAKIE

WASHAKIE

Affectionately Dedicated to Dr. Joseph H. Sayer
of Cozad, Nebraska.

*The story, this of Washakie,
Related years ago to me
By old men of the Shoshone.*

TWAS in the merry month of June—
When Nature, like a maiden dressed
To meet her lover, looks her best;

Attired in robes that sweetly tune
With sunny days and moonlit nights
And air that braces and delights—
That Washakie camped by a rill
Which tumbles down the mountain's side
Into the valley, deep and wide,
Then hurries onward, onward till
Far from the land of Shoshone
It flows a river to the sea.

WASHAKIE

If you have seen the mountain streams
 Roll down the canyons foaming white,
Released by summer's sunny gleams
 From banks of snow, that glisten bright
Upon the highest of the peaks
 That are the first to greet the sun,
And last to feel on their cold cheeks
 His warm, red kiss when day is done
Or seen the islands of the air
 Drift slowly till they hide and whelm
With fleecy shrouds the peaks that share
 The glory of their azure realm;
You've seen a picture where God's hand
 Makes beautiful our native land.

Then add to these, the pines that sigh
Whene'er a zephyr passes by;
The aspen trees that gaily fling
Their silver banners out in spring,
And flowers that in rare beauty blow
Beside the disappearing snow,
While overhead and near and far
Our feathered friends, God's minstrels, are.
Enchantment makes her dwelling place
 Where Nature's gardener aspires
To deftly on the landscape trace
 Her master's wishes and desires.



If you have seen a mountain stream
Roll down the canyons foaming white.

WASHAKIE

'Tis not howe'er such scenes sublime
That to the savage eye appeals;
His instincts point him to the clime
Where the Great Spirit kindly deals
With his necessities, and there
He journeys, certain of his share.

In such a place the camp was made,
The horses turned adrift to graze
Their fill upon the grassy glade;
The squaws assumed their wonted ways
While faithful scouts with eagle eyes
Surveyed the landscape and the skies
For signs that should to them disclose
The presence of their lurking foes.
But nowhere was the tell-tale mould
Indented by the stealthy tread
Of hostile foot, and overhead
No curling smoke to heaven rolled.
Security's seductive spell
Upon the cautious warriors fell,
And squatting on the cushioned ground
They smoked, and passed the pipe around
In silence, save that with each smoke
A grunt the solemn stillness broke.

WASHAKIE

And when the feast of smoke was o'er,
 The pipe of peace no longer burned,
Some sought the streamlet's pebbled shore,
 And some into the forest turned,
While some, beneath a spreading tree,
 Remained to talk with Washakie
About his manly, war-like son
Who in their battles had displayed
The warrior's ready art and trade,—
Had fought their enemies, and won.

The chief was but a savage child
 Of Nature, and as yet untamed
In whitemen's eyes, and undefiled
 By his environments, but famed
For traits the passing whiteman lacked;
 For honesty—all that it meant—
For wisdom and for tender tact
 In tribal joys and discontent;
Loving the truth; and from his lips
 No substitute for it e'er came;
The lying tongue that halts and slips
 Whenever virtue breathes her name
He hated, and the man of lies
 Could find no favor in his eyes.



HE WAS THE FRIEND OF GENTLE PEACE

WASHAKIE

He was the friend of gentle peace,
Ever ready to take her hand
Whene'er she urged that war should cease
Its devastation of the land;
But crafty foes beset the path
And often did they make her flee;
Then they encountered in his wrath
The mighty arm of Washakie.
The annals of the tribal page
Record his prowess in the fray,
His feats of strength, his awful rage
That none of them could curb or stay
Until his enemies had fled
Or at his feet were lying dead.

WASHAKIE

But now the chief, like some good king
Of whom a grateful people sing,
Was seated where the cooling breeze
Sang sweetest in the waving trees,
Beloved and honored, as a knight
Whose cause was ever just and right.
His favored son, Nan-nag-gie strayed
Afar into the forest glade
With comrades of his age and size
Who saw within those deep-set eyes
Ambition's worthy passion gleam
Like sunshine on the rippling stream;
And often had they heard him say
That in some happy future day
He'd lead them as his sire had done
Against the Blackfeet and the Sioux
And, if needs be against the two
Proud, boastful tribes, if joined as one.

WASHAKIE

But hark! alarm has seized the camp;
Upon the hill is seen the foe
Flitting like shadows to and fro
In war's attire; the heavy tramp
Of horses mingles with the yell
Of savagery that fills the dell.

They come, they come! From left to right
They ride around the little band
Of warriors that are close at hand;
Descending like a flash of light
Into a sky that's black as night.

But Washakie with voice and arm
Is quick to quiet the alarm;
And calling loudly from the glade
The warriors hasten to his aid,
And rushing out to meet the foe
They strike him first the hardest blow.
The fight soon ends; the foeman's rout
Is followed by the victor's shout.

WASHAKIE

Nan-nag-gie with the utmost speed
Came forward, but alas too late
To try his skill, or show his hate

For those whom he could see recede
Over the hill from which they came

For glory, but retired with shame.
The chief, his eyes aflame with wrath,

Then said: "See, I have killed this Sioux
But where, brave warrior, where were you

When enemies beset our path?
Now that you see the foes withdraw
You clatter forward like a squaw."

The youth a moment bowed his head
As if ashamed at what was said;
Then looking squarely at his sire
With passion gleaming in his eyes
He cried: "My name will yet arise

As smoke does from a new made fire,
And ere the sun descends, will be
As great as yours, brave Washakie."

WASHAKIE

With that he started like the wind,
His pony dashing up and on
The hill o'er which the foe had gone,
 Till he was lost to those behind.
The warriors gazed in mute surprise
 Until the mad youth passed from sight,
And seeing in their chieftain's eyes
 The sparkle of a softer light,
Each to his horse and mounting, rode
 Over the hill the way he went,
The outline of his figure showed
 His recklessness and rash intent;
And lest he overtake the foe
 Or rush into their ambuscade,
They hurried fast as horse could go
 To be in time with ready aid.

Faster and faster, on he flew,
Faster and faster they pursue,
But all in vain, they saw him fall,
 Pierced by arrows and by spear,
His soul passed out beyond recall
 As kindly help was drawing near.

WASHAKIE

The sun was setting, and the night
Was darkening the mountain side
When they returned with him who died
While life was new and hope was bright.
They laid him in his father's tent

Who beckoned them to leave it so,
As o'er the lifeless form he bent

Convulsed by death's untimely blow;
The watchers passing in the night,
Must not appear before his sight,
Must not intrude upon the grief
That overwhelms their mighty chief.

"My noble boy! my brave, dead son!
Hope of my tribe, hope of your sire!

Could you forgive my hasty ire,

Could I atone the evil done,
How gladly would I die for thee,

Would meet the arrows of the foe,
The same that pierced and laid thee low,

But woe is me, yea, woe is me."

Lamented brave chief, Washakie.

WASHAKIE

“I taught you how to bend the bow,
To speed the arrow straight and true,
To love your tribe as they loved you,
And lead them on against the foe;
They would have gladly followed thee
Had they thy reckless intent known
Of fighting with the foe alone;
Woe is me, woe is me.”
Wailed the brave chief, Washakie.

“Flesh of my flesh, soul of my soul,
Your life was just as much of mine
As is the branch unto the pine
O'er which the mighty tempests roll;
The branch is broken from the tree
Which mourns for its dismembered limb
That cannot be restored to him;
For woe is me, yea, woe is me.”
Sadly wailed brave Washakie.

“The eyes are closed that flashed with fire.
The gaping wounds, that felt the dart
Go through the palpitating heart,
Gave death to thee, and to your sire
Have caused his fondest hopes to flee;
The tongue is still that once could bribe
The homage of our mighty tribe;
Woe is me, woe is me.”
Still mourned the brave chief, Washakie.

WASHAKIE

All the night with bended head
The sad chief waited with his dead,
Mourning the lonely hours away,
Until the sky was tinged with gray;
The warriors, guarding well his tent,
Heard him through the night lament,
But none were bold enough to dare
Encroach upon his presence there,
Nor speak while gliding to and fro
Lest they disturb him in his woe.

But when the sun had risen high,
 He ventured forth like one in age,
And gazed intently at the sky
 As though it would his pangs assuage;
His feeble voice bespoke the grief
 That like an arrow tore apart
All semblance of their mighty chief,
 And left him with a broken heart;
His eyes bedimmed with sorrow's blight,
 No longer blazed with fervid glow;
His hair so black but yesternight,
 At morn is like the new-born snow.

THE PROSPECTOR

THE sun swings low, but its bright glow
 Illumes with a mellow light
The mountain peaks with golden streaks,
 Ere he sinks and hides from sight.
Here all alone in a world my own,
 I live far away from strife,
Lured by the gold these mountains hold
 And for which I stake my life.

I do not sigh, as years pass by
 Like clouds that near me roll;
But fondly grope in the ray of hope
 That lights up my lonely soul;
My star still gleams, in all my dreams,
 O'er the spot I deem most fair,
And I know, I know by its fervent glow
 That the gold, my gold is there.

When hunger gnaws to make me pause
 And my tightened belt won't hold;
Relief comes sure in the magic lure
 And the certainty of gold,—
Gold—gold that lies with covered eyes
 In the grip of Creation's might,
And will only wake when I crush and break
 The folds that hold it tight.

THE PROSPECTOR

With saddened look, my youth forsook
The scenes of my earthly stage;
Likewise my prime passed on in time,
And left me the cares of age;
I plod along with hope still strong
That the next blast will unfold
To my anxious eyes, the wealth that lies—
My gold, my gold, my gold.

THE MAN THAT FAILS

I GIVE a toast to him that strives
For better things in life,
By sailing out on seas of doubt
From shores of want and strife;
And should his ship go down before
The fury of the gale,
I honor him as much or more
Than one who does not fail.

Here's to the man of dauntless mien,
With courage to do and dare
The flight sublime from want and crime
And poverty's cold stare;
Though from the valley of unrest
The plucky fellow hails,
I like him if he does his best
E'en though his effort fails.

The heart that beats with discontent
In some poor fellow's breast
Is not to blame because its aim
Is freedom from unrest;
And if it struggles from the gloom
That hides it in its veil,
Let us be kind and give it room
So that it may not fail.

THE MAN THAT FAILS

Real courage wins our fond applause
 No matter where 'tis found,
The voice of praise attend its ways
 Above and under ground;
Just so unselfish deeds impel
 The doer to prevail;
The hearty effort pleases well
 E'en though the actor fail.

But what of him, the idle knave,
 Who sits and vents his hate
For those who strive to keep alive
 Ambition's worthy trait,
And frowns when these would cut the thong
 That holds them in life's vale;
And when he sees things going wrong,
 Laughs loud because they fail.

The bravest are the men who go
 Where others dare not try,
Who look for life where death is rife
 In mines, where strong men die
Beneath the overhanging rock,
 Or gases that prevail;
Unmindful of the awful shock—
 They go—and sometimes fail.

THE MAN THAT FAILS

The man that leads a mighty host
In warfare's bloody game,
Is not more brave than those who save
Their brothers, without fame;
And those who venture in the dark
On danger's unseen trail,
Deserve much more fair Glory's mark
Although they often fail.

So here's to heroes underground,
The living and the dead,
Whose only aim in life's hard game
Was but to forge ahead;
And though they never reached the goal
Toward which they fondly sailed,
Still I admire each plucky soul
That tried to win but failed.

ROCK SPRINGS
WRITTEN AT EVANSTON

BEHOLD a city in the highlands
Of Wyoming's bare and dry lands.
A child of industry; her birth
Was lowly like the poor of earth,
And as she grew in strength and pride
Her wants were lovingly supplied
By labor's hand. She now obeys
Its mandate, and the debt repays.

Not for sky-scrapers, iron-framed
And rock-cemented, is she famed;
No grand cathedrals raise their spires
To catch the songs of angel choirs;
Nor does sweet Agriculture's worth
Find lodgment in her unkind earth;
But scattered o'er her barren soil
Are humble homes of men of toil,
As dear to them and just as fair
As homes more favored other where.
She's nothing but a wild-west town
From former wildness sobered down
To modern manners; yet a trace
Of old life marks her hardy face.

ROCK SPRINGS

Here's Bitter Creek; an empty thing
Save when the melting snow in spring
Rolls madly down the mountain's side
And fills its channel deep and wide.
At times it nearly overflows
With dirty water, as it goes
Beyond the home of Noah Walters
Where it for a moment falters
To proudly view Jock Noble's castle
Before it starts to fight and wrestle
With old bottles, cans, and sundries
Certain men throw in on Sundays,
Mondays, Tuesdays and on all days
When they're drinking—which is always;
On it goes—its filthy charges
Dash against old Uncle George's
House on stilts, from which it dodges
Past the stable of Frank Hodges',
By Woll Dickson's humble dwelling;
Chopping, grinding, booming, swelling,
Curling, whirling, onward ever
Till it flows into Green River.

ROCK SPRINGS

O, Classic Creek! rich in tradition
Of tragedy and superstition;
Your yearly, reckless inundation
Provides the means of sanitation;
Besides, the Lord knows very well
When you have purged yourself of smell
And other things that much displease
You've freed the town of foul disease.
How many men have you beheld,
Who in outlawry bold excelled,
Fall victim to another's aim
Without disclosing once, his name?
With you the bad man—feared and hated
By all the world—originated,
Flourished, fell and passed away
When law assumed her righteous sway.

The mountains in the distance rise
In barren grandeur to the skies;
The nearer foot-hills old and gray
Like billows seem to bend and sway
Whenever storms sweep o'er the plain
With neither snow nor kindly rain.
But on their wings instead they bear
Huge clouds of sand which fill the air,
The houses, nooks, and every space
That can afford a lodging place.

ROCK SPRINGS

Sometimes it blows until the land
Seems one vast world of moving sand—
The playthings of the wind that roars
And piles it up around the doors,
Like snow-drifts on a wintry day
When blizzards rage and shriek dismay.
“It doesn’t always blow this way,”
The cute old pioneer will say
When asked about this sandy curse:
“Sometimes,” he says, “It blows much worse.”

But you have many sunny days
That fill your sky with mellow haze
And charm the senses with a spell
Your people know and love so well
And O! the nights, the nights in June
Made matchless by a gracious moon,
Flooding the land until it seems
Mid-day without its glinting beams;
A cloudless sky, an atmosphere
Through which the lovely stars appear
Nearer, clearer, and more fair
And larger here than anywhere.

ROCK SPRINGS

The centuries of wind and sand
Have carved as with a magic hand
Upon the rocks, unique designs
Artistic in their queer outlines.

Wind-swept and old, yet they will stand
Like monuments upon the land;
And there they'll be when Time has told
That all the waiting years have rolled
Into eternity's vast deep
Where centuries and ages sleep.

Beneath the rocks, far, far below
Two thousand human beings go
Each day, each busy working day
With lamps to light them on the way
To their black chambers, where the coal
Awaits the heavy blast to roll
In broken fragments from the vein
Which loathes to part with e'en a grain.
But these brave men, white-skinned, and strong
Of faith that right will conquer wrong—

ROCK SPRINGS

Have heard necessity's low call
And heeding it are one and all
Keen for the task the day demands
In labor at their horny hands.
Not heavy-hearted men; I know
For I worked with them years ago;
No, no. The task which must be done
By each, is cheerfully begun
And finished with a song that tends
To ease the labor as it ends.

Ye brothers of the underground,
God-like, erect, and brave and bold;
I greet you with a joy profound,
In memory of days of old,
When life with us was bright and new
And I was counted one with you.
And think ye I will e'er forget
The old days that are living yet?
No, no, brave hearts, it cannot be
While Time's torch brightly burns for me.

ROCK SPRINGS

I've heard a collier's simple song
Ring sweetly through the darkened space,
Bearing a message, clear and strong,
Of courage to his toiling race.
The melody, the sentiment,
Each to the other color lent,
Which, with a mellow voice, combined
To cheer and comfort all his kind.
'Twas when the charge had been exploded,
The coal was ready to be loaded,
And he was waiting for a car
To fill and then send out afar
To markets, where they must have coal
To make the wheels of commerce roll.
The song—when he began to sing—
Seemed such a simple little thing,
Yet had the power to make one feel
A satisfying comfort steal
Into the heart—a conscious pride
In those who labored at his side;
It made one think and then resolve
That when misfortune did involve
A brother in its tightening coil
He'd help him with his fruits of toil;
And when it ended soft and low
I felt a kindly spirit glow
Within the chambers of my breast
And free my soul of its unrest.

ROCK SPRINGS

SONG

When we think that life's frail bubble
 May at any moment burst,
Ending all our earthly trouble
 With the hopes and joys we've nursed;
We should not forget the neighbor
 Whose best days are past and gone;
Who has not the strength to labor,
 Nor the courage to press on.

Courage, boys, and do not falter
 On the road that leads ahead;
There's a joy at duty's altar
 Waiting, when our course is sped;
Onward—helping one another
 Till we pass life's last sharp stone,
Heedful of the needing brother
 Whose sad fate may be our own.

Cheer up, lads, there'll come a morrow
 With a gift of joy for you,
Severing the cord of sorrow
 Which has long been held in view;
Keep the lamp of hope still burning
 In the window of the soul,
So that when from trouble turning
 We may plainly see the goal.

ROCK SPRINGS

Day after day in this old town,
The trips run swiftly up and down,
Bringing the coal from pitchy night
Into the broad and open light;
Taking the empty cars again
Into the darkness where the men
Struggle and strain and fume and sweat
For every dollar that they get.
For them there is no "easy street,"
Nor any way, whereby to beat
The collier's rugged, hard wrought game,
Save by good work and steady aim.
The money paid to them all goes
Into a channel, where it flows
A golden stream of wealth and joy
Which no one could or would destroy.
The merchant, business-like and bold,
Goes fishing in the stream for gold,
Nodding and smiling at kindly fate,
Holding his bargains up for bait,
That women passing by, might look,
And nibble at the luring hook;
The butcher, clean and wide awake
Catches his share by means of steak.
And then, the ever smiling grocer
With always "Yes, sir," never "No, sir,"
Standing among his choicest wares
Busily takes his wonted shares.

The motion picture show inclines
To part the children from their dimes.
The savings bank takes in some gear
And pays you four per cent per year,
But when the same by it is lent
It charges eight to ten per cent.
The tin-horn closeted somewhere
Is busy raking in his share;
The young, the old, against his game
Go rather strong, but quit it lame.
There stands the ever shining star
Behind the richly mirrored bar;
White-aproned, clean and all attention,
Prepared for anything you mention;
He with his new-coined jokes beguiles
His customers with fetching smiles;
He gets his share—they get their fill—
What once was their's goes in his till;
What once was his, goes—pass it o'er—
Next morn they've none, but he has more.

ROCK SPRINGS

Many have prospered in a way
That means forgiveness on that day
When he who rules—the Judge and King—
Will welcome them, while angels sing.
Others prospered because their creed
Embraced the realm of sordid greed,
And while obeying its demands
Gathered the wealth with dirty hands;
Secured in this they now would win
Forgiveness for committed sin,
With saintly looks, and saintly speech
As vehicles on which to reach
The promised land, where angels throng
To chant God's praise in heavenly song.

Some have prospered, not in wealth,
But in the glow of rosy health
Pursue the tenor of their way
In happiness from day to day.
And these are happier than those
Whose greedy arts at once disclose
A selfishness that does not shame
When decency proclaims her name.

ROCK SPRINGS

I like the money—I like the jingle
Of golden eagles, double, single,
Any way, just so it tinkle
And make my eyes with pleasure twinkle.
I like to earn it, feel it, spend it,
That's why I can't afford to lend it.
Real fun is gained in proper spending
Not in grasping, hoarding, lending,
But in parting with the treasure
For a bargain labeled "Pleasure."
Still I admit that discontent
Comes o'er me when I've not a cent
To purchase for my appetite
The things in which it would delight;
But gold while charming to the eyes
Will not buy seats in Paradise;
Will not buy sleep, nor rosy health:
Such joys don't always come with wealth.

But never mind—I like Rock Springs,
The industry that sweats and sings;
The coiling rope, the merry hum
It makes in winding round the drum;
The men, the women, young and old
Who make and spend the hard-earned gold;
The mines, the hills, the wind, the sand,
And more than all—the good, glad hand
Extended by the friends of yore
When I am in their midst once more.

ROCK SPRINGS

She'll be a happy, good old town
So long as trips run up and down
The deep, black slopes in grim array,
Bringing the coal from night to day;
Keeping the men at work below
That market fires may redly glow
In forge and furnace, near and far,
Wherever labor's children are.

What can destroy the fair renown
That hovers o'er this busy town,
Which pictures in its hissing steam
Prosperity's delightful dream?
Should hatred flaunt its grim ensign
Above each busy working mine,
And silence reign instead of noise
We'd see the end of all her joys,
Her wealth, her pride, her lofty station,
Would soon relapse to desolation.
The trouble in a town commences
Whene'er the people lose their senses,
And started once the Lord knows when
Peace will return to it again.

ROCK SPRINGS

Let reason occupy her throne
And give to every man his own,
And nothing more and nothing less;
And children will arise and bless
The name of those at whose command
Arose the mart for labor's hand.

We fondly hope that God will guide,
And keep her people satisfied,
And happy in a destiny
That leaves them prosperous and free.

DENNIS WATERS

WHEN some one shall write the story
 Of Wyoming's humble birth;
Of her past and present glory
 Which is known throughout the earth;—
Of her sons and lovely daughters
 Who acclaim her of the best,
Let the name of Dennis Waters
 Be enrolled among the rest.

Not because of deeds of valor
 Wrought upon the gory field,
Where grim death with ghastly pallor
 Penetrates the brightest shield;
For my hero is no soldier,
 But with sunshine and with mirth,
He bears lightly on each shoulder
 All the troubles of this earth.

DENNIS WATERS

Life is full of sunshine, plenty
To dispel man's ev'ry gloom;
Yet there isn't one in twenty
Who can take and give it room;
But with Dennis it's his treasure,
'Tis in fact his banking roll,
With it he distributes pleasure
Satisfying to the soul.

God bless Dennis, may he ever
Smile the clouds of grief away;
May his happy, glad endeavor
Meet with recompense each day;
Bless old Ireland for giving
Such a gentle spirit birth,
Who has found the art of living
In the avenues of mirth.

SIMPLE JOE

NAY, nay, you must not chide the lad
Nor twit his poverty of mind;
The truth is, he is not as bad
As those who are to him unkind;
If you should pat his head, and speak
To him as you would to a friend
You'd see the pallor on each cheek
With pleasureable color blend.

True he is simple—like a child
He plays all day with childish things;
His lonely hours are thus beguiled
With that to which his fancy clings;
For he is neither boy nor man—
Though grown in size to man's estate—
And has not power to even scan
The vagaries of unkind fate.

Sometimes he'll wander all alone
To places far out of his way,
Where, in an atmosphere his own,
He passes aimlessly the day
Among the flowers, or chasing bees
That sip the honey they contain;
Seeming as though he looked on these
As enemies in his domain.

SIMPLE JOE

He never speaks, nor does he heed
The voice that beckons him away,
Unless it be the voice of need
Which summons him to meals each day;
And at such time it's understood,
That he is near to someone's bin
Having collected coal and wood,
Waiting, ready to bring it in.

Somehow he seems to know right well
He ought to work for what he gets,
In this does he more than excel
The lordly idler, who besets
Society, and does not toil
Nor do a thing, whereby to earn
E'en the respect of those who moil
With lamps that ever dimly burn.

Harmless? Why, sir, he wouldn't harm
A living thing God placed on earth;
To him all creatures have a charm
Which makes them seem of double worth;
Besides, he's welcome everywhere,
In any house he wants to go;
However scanty be the fare
There's always some for simple Joe.

SIMPLE JOE

He wasn't this way from his birth,
No, no. Once he was just as bright
As any lad upon this earth,
Appreciating with delight
The comradeship of kindred souls
Who labored in the mines each day;
And in those gas-infested holes
He was at home, as much as they.

I'll ne'er forget the day they brought
Him out, and laid him on the bed;
They told me that he had been caught
'Neath falling slate, that mashed his head;
His voice returned but once since then,
And that was just three years ago,
When an awful shock brought back again
Words to the lips of Simple Joe.

Send him away from here, you say?
Why, man alive, do you not know
That when he gained his voice that day
It was to save the men below?
You didn't? Well, then list to me,
The story I'll tell in a breath,
You'll then learn why it is that we
Will keep poor Joe until his death.

SIMPLE JOE

'Twas summer time when this occurred,
I was the engineer, and so
The very first to hear the word
That made us all love Simple Joe;
Aye made us all; for until then
Our women e'en made it a rule
As well as little boys, and men,
To think of Joe as but a fool.

The morning whistle blew its blast,
The miners went to work below,
With hopes the warm sunshine would last
To cheer them in the evening's glow;
The engine groaned as out it tossed
The used-up steam from its exhaust.

Like clock-work all was going well.
Responsive to the signal bell
The trips were rushing to and fro
Out and in to the depths below;
And workmen came to me to say
We'd make a record hoist that day.

SIMPLE JOE

My eye was centered on the bell
Which plainly said that all was well,—
When, glancing toward the open door
I saw a face as ghastly white
As snow upon a moonlit night,
Seeming as though it did implore
Attention from someone who'd know
That trouble prompted Simple Joe.

Into the engine house he came.

His face ghost-like, it seemed with fear,
And without calling me by name,

He shouted loudly, “Engineer!
Engineer! The Whistle! Blow!
Quickly warn the men below!
See the fan-shaft all aflame!”

He did not utter one word more,
And gasping fell upon the floor
A helpless mass. At first I turned
To where the fan-shaft fiercely burned,
And saw the smoke and embers roll
And twist and curl beyond control;
Then back I went the quickest way
And made the whistle shriek dismay;
Then to the telephone I ran
And bade the drivers tell each man
To hasten out before the smoke
Into the main air current broke.

SIMPLE JOE

When Simple Joe beheld the men
In safety from the mine appear,
He smiled, but never spoke again
Though urged by every miner here;
Our supper o'er, that very night
We held a meeting in the hall,
Where in the fullness of delight
The men and women, one and all
With heart-felt gratitude declared
Upon our oaths, come weal or woe,
No matter how we later fared,
We'd share our lot with Simple Joe.

TO MY DAUGHTER

On the death of her friend, age 11 years.

YOUR very best friend is gone, my dear,
Is gone on a summer's vacation;
Is gone from the strife and troubles of life
To a pleasanter habitation.

She has closed her books and said goodbye
To loved ones so kind and devoted;
But you must not weep nor disturb her sleep,
For Vina, my dear, is promoted.

The flowers will bloom and fade and die,
The years come and go in rotation,
But still to the end your very best friend
Will remain on her pleasant vacation.

IN MEMORY OF DAVID M. ELIAS
STATE INSPECTOR OF MINES

Killed in the second of two explosions that occurred in No. 1 Mine at Hanna, Wyo., March 28, 1908, while leading a rescue party to recover the bodies of those killed in the first disaster.

MY friend is dead. Life's curtain fell
While he was busy on the stage,
Performing parts that he knew well
Would much of sorrow's pangs assuage.
Killed in a mine. Obeying the voice
Of mercy and the widow's prayer,
Responding to duty, not from choice
Did he become a martyr there.

We grew together to man's estate,
Till fifty years had passed us by;
Hopefully plodding along, when fate
Decreed that one of us should die;
He was the one—it had to be—
I to remain unto the end—
Until the summons comes to me
To go and join my life-long friend.

IN MEMORY OF DAVID M. ELIAS

Did friendship end when death's cold hand
Upon his noble brow was laid
Bursting the warm and tender band
That years of comradeship have made?
Or, does the golden thread extend
Across the chasm of despair;
I still holding to my end
He still holding his end there.

Imbued with honor's sterling worth
From precepts taught to him in youth;
He knew no nobleness of birth
Save what is born of royal truth;
Loving his home, his fellowmen,
His God, and this, his native soil,
And if he hated, it was when
Some creature sneered at those who toil.

I saw him climb through envious strife,
Through jealousies and endless blame,
Until he reached a plane in life
Higher than that from which he came;
This collier's son whose childhood years
Were darkened by misfortune's shade,
Ne'er once forgot his toiling peers
Though many newer friends he made.

IN MEMORY OF DAVID M. ELIAS

The man who dies and does not leave
An enemy among mankind,
While living, does not much achieve
And dying, leaves not much behind.
Man must be strong if he be good,
He must be good if he be just,
And, if in life for these he stood,
Someone, in death, defames his dust.

When death, with sudden, cruel stroke,
Struck at the lives of those he knew,
The voice of duty softly spoke
And urged and told him what to do;
Responsive ever to her call,
He hastily prepared to go,
Hoping that death had not struck all
Who worked that day in the mine below.

Into the depth of that horrid slope,
Which thrice in fury's grasp had flamed,
He calmly went, in fervent hope
To rescue those death had not claimed;
Strong men, the bravest of the brave,
Tested and tried in other years,
But with one thought—and that to save—
Attended him as volunteers.

IN MEMORY OF DAVID M. ELIAS

His task was just begun; below

He knew death lurked with visage grim,
Ready to strike with one quick blow

Himself and those who dared with him;
But unafraid, he ventured on—

On 'mid perils everywhere,
Looking for life—but life had gone

With flames that burned in fury there.

How it happened none can tell!

Why it happened none will know!
With him a host of brave men fell

Under the force of that hard blow;
The widow's prayers will not avail,

The orphans weep and vainly yearn,
For like a ship lost in a gale,

He's gone—and never will return.

Oh! what would we do if hope's bright ray

Should vanish from the human breast,
Leaving the trusting soul a prey

To the agony of doubt's unrest?

But no! it gleams like a brilliant star

Set in the arch of heaven's dome,
Pointing to where our loved ones are

And leading to our final home.

THE WHOLE STORY

"**B**UD Nolan shot! Dead you say!
Killed last night in Baxter's house?
Well—men should never get too gay,
Nor monkey with another's spouse."

TO JAMES NEEDHAM

HE does not drink nor smoke nor chew,
In that respect he's unlike you;
But on the other hand, friend Jim,
You do not lie and steal like him.

TO A SUPERIOR PERSON SINGING

SHE turns up her nose when she sings,
The dear little musical elf;
It cannot be others' she smells,
So the odor must come from herself.

THE MOUNTAIN ASH CHOIR

THE leader waved his magic wand,
And lo, there rolled as from his hand
A flood of sweet, melodic notes
From bird-like throats.

The melody unhindered stole
Into the chambers of the soul,
And glowed until to it was given
A glimpse of heaven.

O singers from my mother's land
Now I can plainly understand
Why those who leave thy hills and dales
Still yearn for Wales.

Go on, Glyndur, with voice and heart
Exemplify your matchless art;
The echoes of your tuneful choir
Will raise men higher.

Through you each one of us may share
The joyful message which you bear
To brothers on these western trails
Far, far from Wales.

WELSH SERVICE

I LIKE the old Welsh service,
The Congregation's song
That fills the sacred Temple
With music, clear and strong.

The Master's loving message
Conveyed in tuneful art,
Relieves the heavy burden
That presses on the heart.

THE WORKMAN'S VISION

I HEARD the shout of Labor
Exulting in the fray,
The gleam of its bright saber
Flash in the light of day;
The flag it proudly followed
To Victory's sweet goal
Is now enshrined and hallowed
In ev'ry workman's soul.

No blood was shed in fighting,
No hate or rage was felt,
But by a firm uniting
The fatal blow was dealt;
And stript of all its power
The Tyranny of Man
Bewails the joyful hour
The people's reign began.

I saw the great procession
March with a purpose grand,
And sweep away Oppression
That long had cursed the land;
The tyranny of ages
No longer showed its head,
And on the world's new pages
A law for man was spread.

THE WORKMAN'S VISION

I heard the voices singing
A new and glorious song,
That ever kept on ringing
In vibrance clear and strong;
It proudly told the story
Of struggles in the past
And how the day of glory
Had dawned on them at last.

I saw the humble cottage
Partake of Comfort's share
The toiler's mess of pottage
Grow into better fare;
And he no longer fawning
At Mammon's ready nod,
Stood under heaven's awning
And only bowed to God.

The day had come when Reason
Sat on the throne of Might,
And banished far the Treason
That had opposed the Right;
The voice becoming stronger
Proclaimed its righteous cause,
And Tyranny no longer
Could stand behind the laws.

THE WORKMAN'S VISION

Oh! hasten Time, and banish
The evils men endure;
Make every hardship vanish
Make happiness secure;
Give hope and strength to Labor,
Uphold it in the fray,
Till all who wield its saber
Shall see the better day.

"GOODBYE, BILL"

M. C. Barrow—"Bill Barlow," Editor of "Sagebrush Philosophy," a magazine of sunshine, died October 9, 1910. These lines were published in the memorial edition of said magazine.

BILL is resting in the valley,
And the constant river flows
Through its rugged rock-bound alley,
Which it widens as it goes—
Broadening as onward sweeping
O'er the pebbles white and still
Till it nears where he is sleeping;
Then it murmurs: "Goodbye, Bill."

Goodbye, Bill; goodbye forever.
Rest in freedom from all pain,
Death, which intervenes to sever,
Will unite us all again;
Hope, the star that beams with glory,
Sheds its rays around us still,
Maybe, when we end life's story,
We can whisper: "Howdy, Bill."

PROGRESS

WHEN smiling Progress comes along
 Bestowing everywhere a favor;
She moves the patient, waiting throng
 To emulate her gay behavior.

Wherever Idleness has bound
 The arm inured to rugged labor,
The galling thong is quick unwound
 Or cut in two by her sharp saber.

Old Poverty with abject mien,
 Repulsive to the eye of gladness,
Cannot endure her cheerful scene
 Which will not brook the shade of sadness.

For plenty follows in her train,
 And both are linked unto each other;
Whatever tends to part these twain
 Hurts labor, their dependent brother.

WHEN I WAS A LAD

WHEN I was a little lad
Working in the mine with dad,
He gave me an easy job
Throwing rubbish in the gob;
Or I helped him tamp the hole
When he had to blast the coal,
When the smoke had passed away
This is what he used to say:

Come, my lad, help me to load
For the driver's on the road;
If we would full wages earn
We must keep up with the turn.

He grew old as I grew strong,
Then I helped him more along;
I gave him the easy job
Throwing rubbish in the gob;
But the time soon came when he
Could not work at all with me,
And when on his dying bed
This is what the old man said:

Come, my lad, help me to load
For the driver's on the road;
If we would full wages earn
We must keep up with the turn.

WHEN I WAS A LAD

I am now a man full grown
Having children of my own,
One of them a sturdy boy
Works and fills my heart with joy;
I give him the easy job
Throwing rubbish in the gob,
And somehow throughout the day
This is what I often say:

Come, my lad, help me to load
For the driver's on the road;
If we would full wages earn
We must keep up with the turn.

SWEETHEART, I LOVE YOU SO

THE tears you shed at parting,
Are like the magic stone,
Attracting from a distance
 My heart unto your own;
I yet can see them glisten,
 Though I am far away,
And when I stoop to listen
 I think I hear you say:

Goodbye my love, it grieves me
 To part with you today;
It seems my own heart leaves me
 And goes with you away;
Love me and I will trust you,
 No matter where you go,
I love you, darling, just you,
 Sweetheart, I love you so.

The night breeze soft and tender
Blows gently from the sea,
Wafting upon its bosom
 An image dear to me;
I see it in the moon-beam
 That dances on the spray
And bending down to listen
 I still can hear you say:

SWEETHEART, I LOVE YOU SO

They tell me time is fleeting,
So quickly does it fly;
To me the hours pass slowly
And will not hurry by;
When loneliness oppresses
Your image comes this way,
And bending down to listen
I yet can hear you say:

PRETTY ANNIE JONES

THERE'S a pretty little maiden
 Living in a shady lane,
Whose cheeks are fairer than the rose
 After a summer rain;
Her eyes are full of merriment
 And shine like stars above,
While in her gentle bosom beats
 A heart full of true love.

Pretty little Annie, light-hearted, sweet and gay,
Singing like a merry lark on a summer's day;
Goodness and rare beauty is all the wealth she
 owns,
But she's the richest girl in town—is pretty
 Annie Jones.

PRETTY ANNIE JONES

I labor in the old coal mine
From early morn to night,
And though the world below is dark
My heart is ever bright,
For in the little shadows that
My lamp makes in that place
I see before my happy eyes
Sweet Annie's charming face.

The earth is full of happiness,
For me it has no pain,
There's only one girl in the world
And she lives in the lane;
The birds cannot outsing her
Nor rival her sweet tones,
The roses cannot be more fair
Than pretty Annie Jones.

THE MINER'S LULLABY

THE miner's wife at close of day,
Sings softly to her fretful child,
Who weary with long hours of play,
Is at her loving breast beguiled.
The sun falls down in golden light
Into the distant, western sea;
And Mamma holding baby tight
Sings low to him a melody.

Hush-a-by, hush-a-by, I hear the water
flowing,
It beats itself into a soft, white foam;
Tooty-to, Tooty-to, I hear the whistle
blowing,
It's quitting time and Papa'll soon be home.

The day has been a busy one
For Mamma and the baby, too,
While she the heavy work has done
He played about as children do;
At last worn out, he takes her hand,
And leads her to the well-known chair,
And she obeying his command
Sings as she holds and rocks him there.

THE MINER'S LULLABY

Hush-a-by, hush-a-by, I hear the water
flowing,
It beats itself into a soft, white foam;
Tooty-to, tooty-to, I hear the whistle
blowing,
It's quitting time and Papa'll soon be home.

When Papa comes with blackened face,
He sees his darling fast asleep,
Held close in Mamma's fond embrace,
While o'er them evening shadows creep;
And bending o'er the sleeping form,
He kisses him with grateful joy,
While Mamma, lest the touch alarm,
Sings lowly to her dreaming boy.

Hush-a-by, hush-a-by, I hear the water
flowing,
It beats itself into a soft, white foam;
Tooty-to, tooty-to, I hear the whistle
blowing,
It's quitting time and Papa'll soon be home.

DON'T BLOCK THE WHEELS OF JOY

SOME fellows always wear a frown
And worry day and night;
They think the world is upside down
And never will get right;
No matter what they say or do
They cannot well destroy
The cup of woe, which must o'erflow
And block their wheels of joy.

Don't block the wheels of joy,
Whate'er you do, old boy;
Conceal all dread and look ahead
See gladness in the sky instead;
The world is full of joy
So, get your share, old boy;
Just frown at strife and laugh with life—
Don't block the wheels of joy.

DON'T BLOCK THE WHEELS OF JOY

Your working place perhaps does not
Meet with your full regard;
The daily grind be of a kind
To make things doubly hard;
Still grumbling will not ease your lot
Nor will real friendship toy
With men who nurse misfortune's curse
And block the wheels of joy.

Don't let your mind get soaked with gloom,
Don't cultivate despair;
A constant frown will keep you down
Upon the floor of care;
Be cheerful and you'll find that friends
Your precept will employ;
Look up and smile and all the while
You'll oil the wheels of joy.

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